

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1           1.     A computer implemented method, comprising:  
2                 (a)     detecting that a printer has encountered an alert condition; and  
3                 (b)     in response to detecting the alert condition, displaying a user  
4     selectable object for initiating a performance by the computer of a specified  
5     function for assisting the user in resolving the alert condition.

1           2.     The method of claim 1, wherein the object is a hyperlink.

1           3.     The method of claim 2, further comprising:

2                 (c)     initiating the printing of a document by the printer; and  
3                 (d)     wherein the printer encounters the alert condition while the  
4     printer is printing the document.

1           4.     The method of claim 3, wherein the hyperlink refers to a Web page  
2     that provides helpful information for resolving the alert condition.

1           5.     The method of claim 3, wherein the function facilitates communication  
2     between the user and an individual who can assist in resolving the alert condition.

1           6.     The method of claim 3, wherein the function facilitates transmission  
2     of an e-mail by the user to a pre-defined e-mail address.

1           7.     The method of claim 3, wherein the function facilitates communication  
2     between the user and a specified individual by using voice or broadcast video.

1           8.     The method of claim 3, further comprising:

2                 (e)     defining a computer function for assisting a user in resolving an  
3     alert condition of a pre-determined type; and

4 (f) if the detected alert condition is of the pre-determined type,  
5 configuring the hyperlink so as to initiate a performance by the computer of the  
6 defined function.

1 9. The method of claim 3, further comprising:

2 (e) receiving input from a user identifying a computer function for  
3 resolving a printer alert condition of a pre-determined type; and

4 (f) if the detected alert condition is of the pre-determined type,  
5 configuring the hyperlink so as to initiate a performance by the computer of the  
6 identified function.

1 10. The method of claim 3, wherein the alert condition indicates a  
2 consumable item in the printer should be replaced; and the specified function  
3 facilitates a placement of an online order of a replacement consumable item with a  
4 vendor.

1 11. The method of claim 3, wherein the alert condition indicates a toner  
2 cartridge in the printer should be replaced; and the specified function facilitates a  
3 placement of an online purchase of the toner cartridge with a vendor.

1 12. The method of claim 3, wherein the alert condition indicates an ink  
2 cartridge in the printer should be replaced and the specified function facilitates a  
3 placement of an online purchase of the toner cartridge with a vendor.

1 13. A server, comprising:

2 (a) means for receiving a request from a client; and

3 (b) means for responding to the request by transmitting a program  
4 of instructions to the client, the program for enabling the client to:

5 (i) initiate the printing of a document by a printer;

6 (ii) detect if the printer encounters an alert condition while printing  
7 a document; and

8 (iii) if an alert condition is detected, display a selectable object for  
9 initiating a performance by the client of a specified function.

1 14. The server of claim 13, wherein the object is a hyperlink.

1 15. The server of claim 14, wherein the function is for assisting a user of  
2 the client in resolving the alert condition.

1 16. The server of claim 14, further comprising:

2 (c) means for receiving input, from a system administrator, that  
3 defines a hyperlink and associates the hyperlink to a particular type of printer alert  
4 condition; and wherein the program of instructions is further for enabling the client  
5 to display the defined hyperlink if the client detects that the printer has encountered  
6 the particular type of alert condition.

1 17. The server of claim 14, wherein the hyperlink refers to a Web page  
2 that provides helpful information for resolving the type of error condition detected.

1 18. The server of claim 14, wherein the alert condition is a paper jam  
2 condition and the hyperlink refers to a Web page that provides information  
3 regarding how to clear a paper jam in the printer.

1 19. The server of claim 14, wherein the alert condition is a low  
2 consumable condition and the specified function facilitates the purchase of a  
3 replacement consumable.

1 20. The server of claim 14, wherein the hyperlink is configured to facilitate  
2 communication between the client user and a specific individual.

1 21. The server of claim 13, wherein the server is incorporated within the  
2 printer.

1 22. A computer readable medium embodying a program of instructions for  
2 causing a computer to perform method steps, the method steps comprising:

3 (a) detecting if the printer encounters an alert condition while  
4 printing a document; and

5 (b) displaying a hyperlink referring to a Web object for assisting a  
6 user in resolving the particular type of alert condition detected.

1 23. The computer readable medium of claim 22, wherein the method steps  
2 further comprising:

3 (c) in response to user input, initiating the printing of the document  
4 by the printer.

1 24. The computer readable medium of claim 23, wherein the method steps  
2 further comprise:

3 (d) defining the hyperlink based upon the type of error condition  
4 detected.

1 25. The computer readable medium of claim 22 wherein the Web object is  
2 a Web page that provides information for resolving the alert condition.

1 26. A server, comprising:

2 apparatus for responding to a pre-defined request received from a  
3 client by transmitting a program of instructions to the client, the program for  
4 enabling the client to:

5 (i) detect if the printer encounters an alert condition while printing  
6 a document; and

7 (ii) if an alert condition is detected, display a hyperlink for  
8 initiating a performance by the client of a specified function for assisting a user in  
9 resolving the alert condition.

1 27. The server of claim 26, wherein the program further enables the client  
2 initiate the printing of the document by the printer.

1 28. A printing system, comprising:

2 (a) a printer operable to print a document and to serve a program  
3 of instructions to a client;

4 (b) a client operable by a user to request the program from the  
5 printer, the program enabling the client to:

6 (i) initiate the printing of a document using the printer;  
7 (ii) if the printer encounters an error condition while printing the  
8 document, display a hyperlink for initiating a performance by the client of a  
9 specified function to assist the client user in resolving the alert condition.

1 29. The printing system of claim 28, wherein the client is a personal  
2 digital assistance (PDA).

1 30. The printing system of claim 28, wherein the client is a personal  
2 computer.

1 31. The printing system of claim 28, wherein the hyperlink refers to a Web  
2 page that provides helpful information for resolving the specific type of error  
3 condition encountered by the printer.